THE *ILLUSTRIOUS WIFE:*

Viz.

That Excellent Poem,

Sir *THOMAS OVERBURIE'S* WIFE

ILLUSTRATED

By *GILES OLDISWORTH*, *Nephew*

to the ſame Sir T. O.

Prov. 31. 12. *She will do him good and not evil, all the daies of her life.*

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Prov. 12. 4.

A Virtuous Woman is a Crown unto her Husband.

The *Illustrious* Wife.

(1)

AS in one *Day* and *Night*, all life we find;
As more of either is the *same again*;
So each *Wife* is a *Brief* of *Woman-kind*,
And doth, *in little*, full as much contain:
God *form'd* her so, that to her *Husband* she,
Like *Eve*, should *a* the *world of Woman* be.

So

So *form'd* he *both*, that *neither* power he gave
Uſe of them-ſelves, but by *Exchange*, to make:
Whence in their *cheekes* the *Fair* no *pleaſure* have,
But by *reflex* of what thence others take:
Our *lips* in their own *Kiſs* no *Sweetneſs* find;
And both our *Eyes* are, t'ward our own *Face*, blind.

Thus

Thus God in *Eve* a *perfect man* begun;
Till now, in vain much of him-ſelf *Man* had:
In *Adam* God created only one;
Eve and the *World to come*, in *Eve* he made.
We are *two halfes*: While *male* from *female* ſtraies,
Both barren are; *Joyn'd*, *both* their *like* can raiſe.

At

(4)

At firſt both *Sexes* were in *Man* combind;
Within his *Body*, *Man* did *She-man* breed:
Adam was *Eves*, *Eve* Mother of *Mankind*;
Eve from *live-fleſh*, *Man* did from *Duſt*, proceed:
One thus made *two*, *Marriage* unites again;
Two Sexes make *one fleſh*, *One fleſh* makes *Twain.*

Since

Since *Man* did but the *well*-being of this life
From *Woman* took; Since *Being*, She from *Him*;
Since God at firſt created *Eve* a *Wife*,
Since her *Sex* did, for *Adams* ſake begin;
Marriage is *Womens* Crown: their *Being* then,
Their now-Perfection, they receive from *Men*.

Marriage

(6)

Marriage; to all whoſe joyes *two parties* be;
Whoſe *joyes* are *doubled*, being *parted* ſo;
Wherein the *bed of love* is *Chaſtitie*;
Whereby *two Soules* into *one Body* go;
Which makes *two*, *one*, while *They two* living be,
And, after death, *one* in their *progenie*.

God

The *Illuſtrious* Wife.

(7)

God to *each man* a *private Woman* gave,
That in that *Center* his *Deſires* might ſtint;
That he a *Conſort like Himſelf* might have,
And that on Her *his like* he might imprint:
Double is *womans uſe:* part of her end
Doth to *this* Age, part to the *next*, extend.

(8)

We fill but *part of Time*, and can not die
Till we the world a *freſh ſupply* have lent:
Children are *Bodies* ſole *Eternitie*:
Nature is *Gods*, *Art* is *Mans*, inſtrument;
Now all *mans Art* no *living Thing* can make,
But herein *Men* in *Things of life* partake.

For

For *wandring Luſt* ; I know 'tis infinite ;
It ſtill *begins*, and *adds not* more to more:
The *Guilt* is *everlaſting* , the *Delight*
This inſtant doth not feel, of *that* before:
The *Taſt* of it is onely in the *Senſe* ;
The *Guilt* is *poiſon* in the *Conſcience*.

Woman is not *luſts* bounds, but *Woman-kind* ;
One is *Loves number*; Who from that doth fall
Hath loſt his Hold, and no *new reſt* ſhall find ;
Vice hath no *Mean*, but *not to be at all* :
A *Wife* is that *Enough* which *luſt* can't find ;
For *luſt* is ſtill with *want*, or *too much*, pin'd.

Bate *luſt* the *Sin*, my ſhare is even with *His*;
For *not to luſt*, and *to enjoy*, is one:
And (more or leſs paſt) equal *Not hing* is;
I ſtill have *one*; He *one at once*, alone:
And, though the *Woman* be oft *varied*, He
Is ſtill the ſame *without varietie*.

If

If in a *ſingle life* we take no joy ,
Marriage out *Luſt* (as 'twere with fewell fire)
Will, with a *Medicine of the ſame*, allay ;
And not *forbid*, but *rectifie*, *Deſire* :
When high *flames* threaten *chimnies*, lay on *wood* ;
This *makes* the *Fire*, and *keepes* the *Fabrick*, good.

Nor

Nor doth my *Marriage* order *luſt* alone;
A *Second-ſelfe* may help me every way;
And, 'gainſt my failings, make me *two for one*:
My ſelf I cannot chuſe, my *Wife* I may;
And, in the *choice of Her*, it much doth lie,
To mend *My ſelf* in my *poſteritie*.

O rather let me *love*, then *be in love*;
So let me *chuſe*, as *Wife* and *Friend* to find;
Let me forget her *Sex*, when I *approve*;
Beaſts likeing dwells in *Senſe*, but *Ours* in *Mind*:
Our *Soules* no *Sexes* have; their *Love* is clean,
And (like *Souls*) pure; *Wives*, in their *Souls*, are *Men*.

But

But *Phyſick* for our *luſt* their *Bodies* be;
But *matter* fit to ſhew our love upon;
But merely *ſhells* for out *Poſteritie*:
Their *Souls* were given, leſt *men* ſhould be alone:
Without *Words Bodies* are *no companie*;
And, but the *Souls interpreters*, *Words* be.

What

(16)

What *goodly Frame* we ſee of *Fleſh* and *Blood*,
Their *Faſhion* is, not *Weight*; It is (I ſay)
But their *Lay-part*, but *Well-digeſted food*;
'Tis but, 'twixt *Duſt* and *Duſt*, Lifes *middle-way*:
Of no worth were the *Lump of Fleſh* that's ſeen,
Did it not *entertain* a *Soul* within.

All

The *Illuſtrious* Wife.

(17)

All the *Externall Beautie* of my *Wife*
Is but *ſkin-deep*, but to two *Senſes* known;
Short even of *Pictures*, ſhorter liv'd then *life*;
Yet doth that *Love* ſurvive which's built thereon:
For our *Imagination* is ſo high,
That *Bodies mett* can't *true love* ſatisfie.

(18)

All *Shapes*, all *Colours*, are alike in *Night*;
Nor doth our *Touch* diſtinguiſh *Foul*, or *Fair*,
But our *obſerving Mind*, and *buſie Sight*;
Theſe, but one week: By *mutual converſe* are
Both made *alike*, which *differed* at firſt view;
Nor can *long Abſence* firſt *diſ-likes* renew.

Nor can thoſe *Features* ſeated in her *Face*,
(More then through *ſelf-deluding Fancies*) be
Of us *enjoy'd* in an *inferiour place*:
Nor, in *enjoying*, can thoſe *Features* ſhe
Her-ſelf make *Ours*: *Love*, while it *rangeth*, *errs*;
We *doat* on *lookes* which are, not *Ours*, but *Hers*.

Birth leſs then *Beautie* ſhall my reaſon blind;
Her *Birth* comes to my *Children*, not to *Me*:
Let me (that *active Gentrie*) *virtue* find,
Rather then (*paſſive Gentrie*) Anceſtrie:
Alive in Her more worth *one virtue* is,
Then all the reſt dead in her *Pedegrees*.

For

For high *Degrees*; High rather be ſhe plac'd
In gifts of *Nature*, then of *Policie*;
Gentrie is a good *Relique* of *Times paſt*;
Yet *love* doth only *what is preſent* ſee.
Things were firſt made, then *Words*: She is the ſame
With, or without, this *Title*, or that *Name*.

As for (the odds of *Sexes*) *Portion*;
Nor will I *ſhun* it, nor mine *Aim*, it make:
Birth, *Beautie*, *Wealth*, are nothing worth alone;
All theſe I would for *good Additions* take,
Not for *good Parts*: They two are ill combind,
Whom *what they have*, not *what they are*, hath joynd.

In

Inſtead of *theſe*, the Object of my *love*
Shall *Virtue* be: When *theſe* with *Virtue* go,
They (in themſelves indifferent) *virtuous* prove;
What's *good* (like *fire*) turns all things to be ſo:
Thine *image* in her *Soul*, LORD; let *Me* place
My *love* upon, not *Adams* in her *Face*.

Good

(24)

Good is a fairer *Attribute*, then *White*:
This (the *Minds beautie*) keepes the other *ſweet*:
This is nor *born*, nor *mortall*, with the *light*;
Nor *gloſs*, nor *painting*, can it counterfeit:
Nor doth it raiſe *Deſires* which ever tend
At once, to their *perfection*, and their *End*.

I, by a *Good*, a *Holy Wife* deſigne;
So *God* ſhe cannot love, and not love *Me*;
Mans law can onely *Words* and *Deedes* refine,
Gods law our *inward Thoughts* doth Sanctifie:
Whence a *Maid raviſh'd* more a *Virgin* is,
Then that *Maid* which hath onely *wiſh'd amiſs*.

Luſt

Luſt onely by *religion* is with-ſtood:
Luſt's Object is *with-out*, its *Strength within*;
Morality reſiſts but in *cold blood*;
Reſpect of *Credit* feareth *Shame*, not *Sin*:
But no place *dark enough* for ſuch *Offence*,
She findes, that's *watch'd* by her own *Conſcience*.

Now

Now may I truſt her *Body* with her *Mind*;
Yea, *here-upon ſecure*, I nere ſhall rue
The *pangs* of *Jealouſie*; yet *Love* doth find
More *pain* to *doubt*, then *know*, ſhe is *Un-true*:
For *Patience* is the *Cure* of Evils-known;
But *Doubt* is ſtill *impatient*, *Doubt* hath none.

Be then that *Thought* once ſtirr'd, 't will never die;
Nor will my *greif* more mild by cuſtom prove:
Untill her *new life* my *Fears* ſatisfie,
Th' *Anguiſh* is more or leſs, as is my *Love*:
This *puniſhment* to *Jealouſie* is due,
That it *may* prove one *Falſe*, *can't* prove one *True*.

Suſpicion

Suſpicion may the *Will of Luſt* reſtrain,
Goodneſs prevents from having *ſuch a will*;
A *Wife* that's *Good* doth *Chaſt*, and *more*, contain;
Chaſtitie is but *Abſtinence* from ill,
And is, though in a *Wife* that's *bad*, the beſt
Of *qualities*, in a *Good Wife* the leaſt.

Prudence

Prudence muſt keep us *Chaſt*, not *Jealouſie*:
Such *lawfull things* to be avoided are
As may the *cauſe* of *things unlawfull* be;
Luſt, ere it hurts, is beſt deſcri'd a far:
Luſt is a *ſin of two*; He that is ſure
Of *either* perſon, is of *both* ſecure.

The *Illuſtrious* Wife.

(31)

Give me, next *Good*, an *Vnderſtanding Wife*;
By Nature *wiſe*, not *learned* by much Art:
Some *Knowledg* in her, will to all my life
More *Scope of Converſation* impart;
Beſides, 'twill *in-bred virtue* fortifie;
They are moſt *firmly good*, who beſt know why.

A *paſſive Underſtanding* to *conceive*,
And *judgment* to *diſcern*, I wiſh to find:
Beyond *theſe*, all as *hazardous* I leave:
Learning and *pregnant witt*, in *Woman-kind*
What they find *malleable*, that they make frail;
And do not add more *Ballaſt*, but more *Sail*.

Domeſtick

The *Illuſtrious* Wife.

(33)

Domeſtick Charge doth beſt that *Sex* befit;
Contiguous Buſineſs; ſo to fix the *Mind*,
That *leiſure* ſpace for *Fancies* not admit;
Their *leiſure*'tis, corrupteth *Woman-kind*:
Elſe, being plac'd from *many Vices* free,
They had to *Heaven* a *ſpeedier way* then *we*.

Bookes are a part of *Mans* prerogative;
In *formall* Ink they *Thoughts* and *Voices* hold;
That we to them our *beſt ſpare houres* may give;
And make *Time* preſent travel *that of old*:
Our life *Fame* peiceth longer at the end;
And *Bookes* our life do farther backward ſend.

As

The *Illuſtrious* Wife.

(35)

As *Good* and *Knowing*, let her be *Diſcreet*;
This, to the others *Subſtance*, *luſtre* brings;
Diſcretion doth conſider what is *meet*,
Goodneſs but what is *lawfull*; only *Things*,
Not *Circumſtances*: Without *this*, even holy
Mens *learning* and *witt* are *curious folly*.

To keep their *Name*, ſince 'tis in others hands,
Needs *Diſcretion*: Their *Credit* is by farr
More *frail* then *Them:* On *likelihoods* it ſtands;
And hard to be diſprove'd *Luſts ſlanders* are.
Their *Carriage*, not their *Chaſtitie* alone,
Muſt keep their *Name* chaſte from *Suſpicion.*

The *Illuſtrious* Wife.

(37)

Womens Behaviour is a ſurer *Barr*
Then is their *No*; *This* fairely doth *denie*,
Without *denying*; Hereby *fond men* are
Kept even from *Hope*: In part too blam is ſhe,
Which hath (*without conſent*) bin onely tride;
He comes *too neer*, that comes to be *denied*.

Now, ſince a *Woman* we to marrie are,
A *Soul* and *Body*, not a *Soul* alone;
When *one* is *Good*, then be the *other Fair*:
Beautie is *Health* and *Beautie*, both in one.
Be ſhe ſo *Fair*, that ſhe moſt *Wives* contain;
So *Fair* that *change* can yeeld to *Me* no gain.

So

So *Fair* at leaſt let me *imagine* Her;
That *Thought* to *me* is *Truth*: *Opinion*
Cannot in matter of *Opinion* err:
With *no eyes*, ſhall I ſee her, but *mine own*:
And, as my *heart conceiveth* Her to be,
Such is ſhe to my *Sight*, my *Touch*, and *Me*.

The *Face* we may the *Seat* of *Beautie* call;
In it a *Taſte* of the whole *Bodie* lies;
Nay, even a *Reliſh* of the *Mind* with-all:
And, of the *Face*, the life moves in the *Eyes*:
So like each other theſe *two Eyes* we ſee,
That theſe *two Eyes*, *two* but *in number*, be.

(41)

Beautie, in decent *Shape* and *Colour*, lies;
Colours the *matter* are, and *Shape* the *Soul*;
The *Soul* doth from no *ſingle part* ariſe,
But keeps a *juſt proportion* in the *whole*:
Such is the *pure ſpirituall* harmonie
Of *every part* united in the *Eye*.

Love is a kind of *Superſtition*
Fearing that *Idoll* which it ſelf hath fram'd;
Luſt is a *Fire*, which rather from its own
Temper, then from its *Object*, is enflam'd:
Beautie is *loves* object; *Woman*, *luſts*, to gain;
Love, *love* requires; *Luſt*, only to *obtain*.

No

No circumſtance doth *Beautie* beautifie
Like *gracefull Faſhion, native Comlineſs*:
This even getts pardon for *Deformitie*:
Beget, Art cannot; but *Art* may *redreſs*:
When *Nature* had fix'd *Beantie* perfect made,
Something ſhe left for *Motion* to adde.

But let that *Motion* more to *Modeſtie*
Tend, then t' *aſſurance*; *Modeſtie* doth ſet
The *Face* in her juſt *Form*, from *Paſſions* free:
'Tis both the *Minds*, and *Bodies Beautie*, met:
But *Modeſtie*, no *Virtue* can *Eye* ſee;
This is the *Faces* onely *Chaſtitie*.

Where *Goodness* failes, there *Modestie* withstands:
Hence 'tis, that *Women* (though they *weaker* be,
And their *Desires* more *strong*, yet) in their hands
The *Chastitie* of *Men* doth often lie:
Of all sins, *lusts* would sins most *common* grow,
Could *one* alone fulfill the *lusts* of *two*.

All

All these *good parts* a *perfect Woman* make;
Add *Love to me*, they make a *perfect Wife*;
Without her *love*, her *Beautie* I did take
For (that of *Pictures*) dead; *Love* gives it life:
Till now, her *Beautie* (like the *Sun*) did shine
Alike to all; *Love* makes it onely *Mine*.

And

And of this *love* let *Reason* Father be,
And *Passion* Mother: Let it from the *one*,
Its *Being* take; from th' *other*, its *Degree*;
Self-love, which *second loves* are built upon,
Will make me, if not *Her*, her *love* regard;
No man but favours his *own worths* reward.

As

As *Good* and *Wise*, so be she *Fit* for me;
With me *to will*, and *Not to will*, the same:
My *Wife* is mine *Adopted Self*: and She,
As *Me*, so *what I love*, to love must frame:
Since God to *Men* in *Marriage Women* gives,
Wives must submit to *Men*, not *Men* to *Wives*.

FINIS.

Sir

Sir *Thomas Overburie* his Epitaph written by Him-ſelf.

THe Span *of my daies* meaſur'd, *here I reſt*;
That is, *my* Body; *but my* Soul, *its* Gueſt,
Is hence aſcended: Whither, neither Time,
Nor Faith, *nor* Hope, *but onely* Love, *can climbe:*
Where, being now enlightned, *ſhe doth know*
The Truth *of all, men argue of below:*
Onely this Duſt *doth here* in pawn *remain,*
That, when the World *diſſolves*, She'l *come again.*

G. O. to the Reader:

THe *Husband*, having well ſet down his *Wife*,
Joynes his own *Epitaph* next under-neath:
To wit, Though *Marriage* be a *double life*,
That *double life* is plac'd *next door* to *Death*:
That is, To ſuch as neither *Fleſh* controul,
Nor do, to their LORDS CHRIST, *eſpouſe* their *Soul*:
But *Graves* them-ſelves are made a *Marriage-bed*,
To ſuch as *die to ſin*, and JESUS *wedd*.

Pro: {19. 14. / 18. 22.

A prudent Wife is from the LORD: *and whoſoever findeth her, obtaineth a favour from the* LORD.

To him (in all his Diſpenſations) be glory forever and ever aſcribed, Amen, Amen.

FINIS.

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THO. TOMKYNS.